

HORNCASTLE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report
of the
Medical Officer of Health
1953

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

Medical Officer of Health

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To the Chairman and Members of the Horncastle Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for 1953. There are no great changes to report, but attention should be paid to the extremely satisfactory figures for birth and death rates.

There is some failure to obtain an adequate rate of immunization and vaccination, which, although not now a matter for the Rural District Council as a body can yet be helped by the individual members who have considerable persuasive powers.

Housing will again be a main preoccupation of the Council, in the coming year, for the Housing Survey is likely to reveal a further deterioration in cottage property. It may become the duty of the Council to deal with many properties by means of demolition orders, etc. and a change in population distribution may develop, with increasing concentration of population in villages and the abandonment of isolated dwellings.

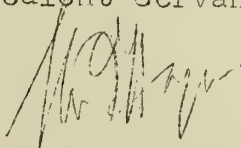
The concentration of population will call for increased amenities in the way of sanitation, scavenging, water and electricity supply.

The release of the meat trade by the Ministry of Food in 1954 will cause a very considerable demand upon the time of your Sanitary Inspectors and it will be some time before the final pattern of the meat industry can be foreseen.

Progress at an increasing rate is anticipated for your comprehensive water scheme.

In all other respects the form of the report remains similar to former years, with simplification wherever possible.

I am, Sirs,
Your obedient Servant,



Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS

AREA OF RURAL DISTRICT:	114,629 acres
REGISTRAR GENERAL'S ESTIMATE OF MID-YEAR RESIDENT POPULATION:	13,870
DENSITY OF POPULATION:	0.121 persons per acre
NUMBER OF INHABITED HOUSES:	
(PERMANENT)	3,848
(TEMPORARY)	100
(CARAVANS, ETC)	13
RATEABLE VALUE OF RURAL DISTRICT:	£43,214.
SUM REPRESENTED BY PENNY RATE:	£172. 13. 8d.

VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births

Legitimate	Male	114
	Female	<u>119</u>
	Total	<u>233</u>
Illegitimate	Male	4
	Female	<u>4</u>
	Total	<u>8</u>
Total live births		241
Crude Live Birth Rate, per thousand Estimated Population		17.45
Standardized Live Birth Rate per thousand Estimated Population		22.15
Live Birth Rate, England and Wales per thousand Population		15.5

Still Births

Legitimate	Male	2
	Female	1
Illegitimate	Male	0
	Female	0
Still Birth rate, per thousand live births, 1949 - 1953 mean		18. 6
Still Birth rate, per thousand live births, 1953 only		12. 4
Still Birth rate, England & Wales, per thousand live Births, 1953		22. 4
Still Birth rate, per thousand Estimated Population		0.216
Still Birth rate, per thousand Estimated Population, England and Wales		0.35

Reviewing the years 1947 - 1953 there has been a worth while decrease in the proportion of still births and of illegitimate births, especially in the last 3 years.

DEATHS

Males	87	
Females	82	
Crude Death rate per thousand Estimated Population		12. 2
Standardized Death rate per thousand Estimated Population		11. 2
Death rate, England & Wales, per thousand Estimated Population		11. 4

Distribution of Deaths in Age Groups

Age at Death	0-1	1-4	5-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 & Over
No. of Deaths	5	1	1	4	6	4	10	16	47	74
% of total Deaths	2.9	0.6	0.6	2.4	3.55	2.4	5.9	9.5	27.8	43.7

Causes of Death at ages under 65 years.

0 - 1 Prematurity (2), Congenital Defect (2)
Ulcerated Oesophagus (1)

1 - 4 Whooping Cough (1)

5 - 14 Appendicitis (1)

15 - 24 Accidents (4)

25 - 34 Aircraft Accidents (5) Cancer of Uterus (1)

35 - 44 Tuberculosis (1), Cancer of Uterus (1),
Lymphadenoma (1), Pneumonia (1)

45 - 54 Cardiovascular diseases (4), Diabetes (1)
Bronchitis (1), Bronchiectasis (1)
Tuberculosis (1) Hepatoma (1)

55 - 64 Cancer (6) Cardiovascular diseases (10)
Nephritis (2).

Maternal Mortality

Since 1945 there has been no maternal death and in the same period 1919 children have been born.

Causes of Death as shown in the Registrar General's short list.

Short List No.	Causes of Death	Male	Female	Total
1.	Tuberculosis, Respiratory	0	3	3
2.	Tuberculosis, other	0	0	0
3.	Syphilitic disease	0	0	0
4.	Diphtheria	0	0	0
5.	Whooping Cough	1	0	1
6.	Meningococcal infections	0	0	0
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	0	0	0
8.	Measles	0	0	0
9.	Other infective and Parasitic diseases	0	0	0
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	1	0	1
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus	5	0	5
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, breast	0	3	3
13.	Malignant Neoplasm, uterus	0	2	2
14.	Other Malignant and lymphatic Neoplasms	11	7	18
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	0	0	0
16.	Diabetes	0	1	1
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	16	13	29
18.	Coronary disease, angina	10	9	19
19.	Hypertension with Heart Disease	2	2	4
20.	Other Heart Disease	10	13	23
21.	Other circulatory disease	3	2	5
22.	Influenza	1	7	8
23.	Pneumonia	2	0	2
24.	Bronchitis	7	5	12
25.	Other diseases of Respiratory system	1	0	1
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	0	1	1
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	0	0	0
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	1	1	2
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	2	0	2
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	0	0	0
31.	Congenital malformations	1	2	3
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	4	8	12
33.	Motor Vehicle accidents	1	1	2
34.	All other accidents	8	2	10
35.	Suicide	0	0	0
36.	Homicide and operations of war	0	0	0
Total		87	82	169

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Disease	Notifications	Deaths
Pneumonia	22	5
Scarlet Fever	8	0
Tuberculosis, Respiratory	1	3
Tuberculosis, other	1	0
Measles	246	0
Whooping Cough	86	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	0
Food Poisoning	6	0
Dysentery	1	0

The increased incidence of pneumonia was associated with an outbreak of influenza in the earlier months of the year. As is usual it is lethal only in the very old and very young and the majority of deaths from the disease were at the ages over 75 years.

Food Poisoning occurred in one localized outbreak at Bonniworth and, although it hit the national headlines, was not serious. Only one person was at all seriously ill.

The manner in which the food became poisoned was as follows:

In preparation for a party, a quantity of ham, tongue and chickens were cooked together in an electric copper. When cooked, the liquor was drawn off through the tap and when the meats were cool enough to handle, they were lifted out on to a slab to cool overnight before being placed in the domestic refrigerator until required 3 days later. Subsequent investigation showed that the same phage type of staphylococcus aureus was present in the faeces and vomit of the victims, on the surface of the chicken and the meat slices, and in the nose and throat of the person who cooked them.

The same organism is present in nearly half the population so she could not be regarded as a carrier of disease. However, perhaps by a chance sneeze or cough or in some other way the organisms were implanted on the cooked meats when they were cooling and, as the night was warm, these remained lukewarm long enough for the organisms to multiply rapidly and produce their poison. The only possibility of avoiding outbreaks of this sort is to cool cooked foods as rapidly as possible to below 45°F and in the process to handle them as little as possible.

There is considerable risk of food poisoning resulting from the manufacture of ice-cream and since the war, the ice-cream, heat-treatment regulations have been framed to eliminate this risk.

Essentially, all ice-cream mixture should be heated to the prescribed temperature and held for a certain time at that temperature before being cooled rapidly to a temperature below 45°F. If this is done reliably, the ice will be safe, but otherwise there is a real risk.

For this reason, many sellers of ice-cream have ceased manufacture on a small scale and instead, buy in pre-packed ice-creams. This practice will, I hope, continue, for effective sampling can only be carried out where manufacture is concentrated and only on a large scale can really effective equipment be installed without disproportionate expense.

Measures for control of infectious
diseases

Diphtheria Immunization, Small pox Vaccination and
Whooping Cough Immunization.

The following figures are given by the County Medical Officer of Health

Diphtheria Immunization	Under 5 years	5 - 14 years	Boosting Doses
(1953)	132	5	104
(1952)	150	14	168

	Under 1	1 - 4 years	5 - 14 years	15 or Over	Total
Vaccinations	71	9	1	2	(1952 total 83 73)
Revaccinations	-	2	2	5	9

	Under 1	One	Two	Three	Four	Total
Whooping Cough Immunization	6	13	2	5	0	26

This is the first year in which figures are available for Whooping Cough Immunization. This disease is most dangerous in early infancy and it is important to get infants immunized between the 3rd and 4th month for greatest safety. By the time a child is three, most of the danger is passed and above the age of 5 years, immunization is considered unnecessary at present.

In the cases of Diphtheria Immunization the number immunized under 5 years of age represents 55% of the births during the year. This is a very low figure and is 20% below the safety limit. The position is as bad in the case of smallpox vaccination where only 29% of babies born were vaccinated.

These figures contrast sharply with similar figures for Woodhall Spa where 100% are immunized and 84% vaccinated. It is apparent that what can be done in one small area, within the limits of the Rural District outline, is not impossible, in the remainder of the area, though obviously the distance from doctor's surgeries does increase the difficulties.

Tuberculosis

A review of notifications and deaths over the past 7 years is interesting.

	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	Average 1947-1953
Pulmonary Notifications	7	5	2	2	9	5	1	4.4
Non-Pulmonary Notifications	4	3	5	1	5	0	1	2.7
Total Deaths	1	2	5	3	2	2	3	2.6

Whilst this year shows a reduction in notifications to the lowest post-war figure, deaths remain unaltered and it is doubtful whether this is a real improvement or merely failure of doctors to notify cases of tuberculosis. The total number of cases on record is small, and considerable fluctuations occur from year to year.

Tuberculosis is a disease of poverty and bad housing. In pre-war years both were rife in Lincolnshire. In the war and post-war period the increase in relative prosperity has not often been passed on to the unskilled families amongst whom the disease is most common. The housing of the rural district was shown in the 1947 survey to be far from satisfactory - one house in five was fit only for reconstruction or demolition. Of these houses, many were and are tenanted by the poorer worker who, with lower earnings and less skilful use of their time and resources, are able to make their homes less habitable than a more skilled man would have done had he been forced to live in such a place.

A fresh housing survey is soon to begin and in planning any replacement or reconditioning of houses, attention should be given to the needs of poor families who will need adequate but perhaps simpler accommodation than the average, and who may be unable to pay the rent of a normal council house without so depriving them of resources that their nutrition fails and tuberculosis is encouraged.

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

No changes have been made in this district other than the introduction of the County Council's Scheme for anti-whooping cough immunization.

The limiting factor in the efficiency of the service is predominantly the sparseness of population, so that although clinics and hospital services are available in the larger centres, it is not easy for all who need attention to get to them. No actual cases of persons seriously suffering from this cause have come to notice but many minor anxieties would have been spared had it been easier for some remote families to see their doctors.

Chronic hospital accommodation is lacking in this as in other areas, but I have found the hospital authorities very co-operative where there has been any emergency for admission.

National Assistance Acts Section 47
as amended

No cases have had to be brought before the Council during 1953.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE
DISTRICT

Housing

Totals for completed houses remain low compared with the number of houses requiring replacement, but rehousing throughout the country is limited by the proportion of national production which can be diverted from the export market. Whether a fair share of the housing available comes to a rural district such as this may be debatable, but it will be many years before any significant proportion of the unsatisfactory houses of the district are replaced.

The new housing survey may reveal possibilities of economy by rehabilitating existing buildings but, in this district, opportunities of this sort are unlikely to be frequent.

Water Supply

Shortage of water remains a major problem in this area. This authority cannot usefully become a producer of water which is likely to be increasingly derived from the proposed deep bores at Raithby, near Louth. Unfortunately, the Governmental permission to go ahead with the main source works was not given until well into 1954 and a wide area of the District is not as yet piped for a water supply.

The two small sources in the western half of the area have been operated to their limit to augment the supplies from Welton, Caistor and Louth, but now demands continue to exceed supplies, and the demands of the milk producers increase enormously. Clean milk is essential to the well being of the community, and cleanliness without abundant water is next to impossible.

Sewage Disposal

No major works in connection with sewerage were undertaken during the year, although plans for a comprehensive modern works for Wragby and an extension of the Coningsby plant have been approved.

A reduction in R.A.F. personnel at Coningsby has temporarily eased the overload of that plant, but the old partial-treatment systems at Wragby must be expected to fail increasingly with the increase in modern housing.

Refuse Collection

A second refuse lorry was obtained during the year and in consequence it was possible to improve the service provided.

Nevertheless, it is only in the major centres of the population that any but hard-ware refuse can be collected.

REPORT OF WORK DONE BY SANITARY INSPECTOR

<u>Total No. of new houses erected during the year</u>	41
(1) By the Local Authority	19
(2) By other Local Authorities	Nil
(3) By other bodies or persons	22

Inspection of Dwelling Houses

(1)a. Total number of dwelling houses inspected for Housing Defects (under Public Health and Housing Acts)	182
b. No. of inspections made for the purpose	226
(2) No. of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	9
(3) No. of dwelling houses found not to be in all respects reasonable fit for human habitation (exclusive of those referred to in preceding sub-head)	185

Defects remedied without Service of Formal Notice

No. of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	26
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Action under Statutory Powers

(1) Proceedings under the Housing Act, 1936, Secs. 9, 10 and 36 :-	
a. No. of dwelling houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring repairs	Nil
b. No. of dwelling houses rendered fit after service of formal notices -	Nil
(i) By owners	Nil
(ii) By Local Authority in default of owners	Nil

Proceedings under Public Health Acts

(1) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defect to be remedied	5
No. of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice -	
(i) By owners	Nil
(ii) By Local Authority in default of owners	Nil

Proceedings under sections 11, 12 and 13 of the
Housing Act, 1936.

(1) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which demolition orders were made	Nil
(2) No. of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of demolition orders	Nil
(3) No. of dwelling houses subject to under- takings	2

Housing Act, 1936 Part IV - Overcrowding

(1) Number of dwelling houses overcrowded at the end of the year	Not known
(2) No. of families dwelling therein	-
(3) No. of persons dwelling therein	Not known
(4) No. of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	2
(5) No. of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	2
(6) No. of persons concerned in such cases	11
(7) Number of houses again overcrowded after being previously relieved	Nil

Housing Act, 1949

(1) No. of applications for grants received	3
(2) No. of grants made	2
(3) No. of applications for grants made by Local Authority	Nil

Movable Dwellings, Tents, Vans, etc.

(1) No. of site licences	Nil
(2) No. of individual licences	13
(3) No. inspected during year - Sites	Nil
- Dwellings	13
(4) No. of contraventions remedied	Nil

Backhouses

(1) No. in district	13
(2) No. of inspections	13
(3) No. of contraventions	Nil
(4) Defects remedied	Nil

Control of Milk Supplies

(1)	No. of distributors on register	4
(2)	No. of dairies on register	1
(3)	No. of inspections of dairies	2
(4)	Contraventions remedied	Nil
(5)	No. of milk samples taken	91

Ice Cream and Meat Products

(1)	No. of manufacturers	
(a)	Ice Cream	2
(b)	Meat Products	19
(2)	No. of premises registered for sale of Ice Cream	30
(3)	No. of Contraventions found	Nil
(4)	No. of Contraventions remedied	Nil
(5)	No. of samples of Ice Cream taken	Nil

Slaughter-Houses

(1)	No. on register	10
(2)	No. of inspections	10
(3)	Contraventions of by-laws	Nil
(4)	Defects remedied	Nil

Other Food Premises

(1)	No. of inspections	12
(2)	No. of contraventions found	Nil
(3)	No. of contraventions remedied	Nil

Other Foods Condemned

14 - 2 pints evaporated milk
2 - 6 lbs Ox Tongue
11 - 1 lb Tinned Plums
4 - 13 oz. Tinned Peaches
1 - 12 oz. Corned Beef.

Drainage and Sewerage

Closets

(1)	No. of houses with privy vaults in district	Not known
(2)	No. of houses with pail closets in district	Not known
(3)	No. of pail closets repaired	9
(4)	No. of water closets substituted for dry receptacles	15
(5)	No. of houses with water closets in district	Not known
(6)	No. of water closets repaired	38

Drains

(1)	Drains examined, tested, exposed, etc.	78
(2)	Drains unstopped, repaired, etc.	33
(3)	Waste pipes, disconnected, repaired, etc.	24
(4)	Existing soil pipes, etc. renewed or repaired	Nil

Sewers

(1)	New lengths of sewer laid	Sewer Diversion, The Slaters, Bucknall.
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Tanks, Filter Beds, etc.

(1)	Alterations to sewage disposal works	Nil
(2)	Any inadequacy of sewage disposal works or complaints as to smells	Coningsby - Yes

Cesspools

(1)	Cesspools emptied, cleansed, etc.	335
(2)	Cesspools abolished	15

Offensive Trades

(1)	No. of premises in district	1
(2)	No. of inspections	3
(3)	Contraventions of by-laws	Nil
(4)	Contraventions remedied	Nil

Knackers Yard

(1)	No. licensed	2
(2)	No. of inspections	3
(3)	Defects remedied	Nil

Shops Act, 1950

(1)	No. of shops inspected	Nil
(2)	Contraventions remedied	Nil

Water Supply

(1)	Wells	
	(a) New Sunk	8
	(b) Closed as polluted	Nil

(2)	Percentage of houses internal supply	99%
(3)	Communal Supply	1%
(4)	Number of samples obtained for analysis	
(a)	From wells	27
(b)	From Public Supply	8
(5)	Any insufficiency and where	Yes - Eastern side of District.

Disinfection, etc.

(1)	Rooms disinfested	
(a)	Ordinary infectious disease	Nil
(b)	Tuberculosis	2
(2)	Rooms stripped and cleansed	Nil
(3)	No. of premises disinfested	3

House Refuse

(1)	No. of houses using dustbins	Not known
(2)	Is refuse removed by householder or by public scavenger?	Public Scavenger
(3)	How frequently is refuse removed from each house?	Quarterly
(4)	No. of complaints of non-removal	17
(5)	Method of final disposal	Controlled Tips
(6)	Are existing arrangements for removal satisfactory?	Yes

Nuisances

(1)	a. Abated as a result of informal action by the Sanitary Inspector	58
	b. Reported to Council	
	(Statutory Notice issued)	Nil
	(Statutory Notice not issued)	Nil
(2)	Details of Nuisances abated after informal intimation	
	a. Smoke	Nil
	b. Accumulation of Refuse	15
	c. Foul ditches, ponds and stagnant water	6
	d. Fowls, pigs and other animals	4
	e. Drapiness	23
	f. Yards repaved or repaired	2
	g. Other nuisances	8

Rats and Mice Destruction

- | | |
|---|-----|
| (1) No. of Rodent Operatives employed | 1 |
| (2) No. of premises treated :- | |
| (a) Dwelling houses | 321 |
| (b) Other premises | 90 |
| (3) Are there any serious reservoirs of rats in district? | No |

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948

1. - Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises (1)	M/c line No.2 (2)	Number on Register (3)	Number of Inspections (4)	Number of Written Notices (5)	Occupiers Prosecuted (6)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities (Non Power)	1.	17	17	Nil	Nil
(ii) Factories not included in (i) above in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authorities	2.	60	33	Nil	Nil
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	3.	-	-	Nil	Nil
Total		77	50	Nil	Nil

Cases in which defects were found

	Found	Remedied
Sanitary Conveniences -		
(a) Insufficient	1	1
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1
Total	2	2

